

Message Text

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OTP:RFISHMAN - IO/UN/BAPS:JSAULS
NBS:EISTVAN
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SUBJECT: U.S. POLICY RE THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL BUREAU FOR
INFORMATICS

1. THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL BUREAU FOR INFORMATICS (IBI) IS A
NON-UN AFFILIATED INTERGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION OF 22 MEM-
BER STATES HEADQUARTERED IN ROME. IT IS THE SUCCESSOR TO
THE INTERNATIONAL COMPUTATION CENTER, AN ORGANIZATION SET
UP WITH UNESCO SPONSORSHIP IN 1961. THE IBI CONTINUES TO
ACT IN CONJUNCTION WITH UNESCO IN SPONSORING CONFERENCES.

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2. THE PRESENT IBI IS LARGELY THE CREATION OF ITS DIRECTOR

GENERAL, F. A. BERNASCONI (ARGENTINA) WHO HAS ENCOURAGED DEVELOPING COUNTRY MEMBERSHIP BY EXPLOITING THEIR FEELINGS THAT THEY HAVE NO COMMAND OVER THE INFORMATION THEY NEED AND MAKING INFLATED CLAIMS FOR THE IBI'S POTENTIAL BENEFITS. THE ONLY DEVELOPED COUNTRY MEMBERS ARE FRANCE, ISRAEL, ITALY AND SPAIN.

3. THE IBI HAS A VERY SMALL SECRETARIAT IN ROME, COMMISSIONS AND ISSUES DOCUMENTS ON INFORMATICS AND HAS JOINTLY SPONSORED SEVERAL CONFERENCES WITH UNESCO AS WELL AS WITH NONGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS. THE TECHNICAL QUALITY OF BOTH DOCUMENTS AND CONFERENCES IS VARIABLE, OFTEN POOR AND INSPIRES FALSE HOPES AS TO THE ROLE OF INFORMATION SYSTEMS TO THE FUTURE OF DEVELOPING COUNTRIES AND POLITICIZES TECHNICAL ISSUES.

4. THE IBI HAS BEEN VERY ACTIVE IN ATTRACTING ATTENTION TO ITSELF IN THE UN. THE RECENT MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY FOR DEVELOPMENT RECOMMENDED THAT ECOSOC ADOPT A RESOLUTION WHICH INCLUDES THE IBI IN AN AD HOC WORKING GROUP ON THE APPLICATION OF COMPUTER SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY ON AN EQUAL BASIS WITH COMPONENTS OF THE UN SYSTEM. THE IBI'S GOAL APPEARS TO BE RECOGNITION AS A UN SPECIALIZED AGENCY.

5. U.S. GOVERNMENT AGENCIES INVOLVED WITH IBI'S SUBJECT MATTER ARE UNANIMOUS IN CONSIDERING THE ORGANIZATION OF LITTLE VALUE TO THE U.S. GOVERNMENT. THEIR VIEW IS THAT INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION IN THIS AREA IS ADEQUATELY HANDLED BY NONGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS, SUCH AS THE INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION FOR INFORMATION PROCESSING (IFIP). THEY FEEL THAT THERE IS NO NEED FOR AN INTERGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION.

6. ADDRESSEE MISSIONS ARE REQUESTED TO MONITOR THE ACTIVITIES OF THE IBI IN THE UN SYSTEM AND TO DISCOURAGE THE INCLUSION OF THE IBI IN RESOLUTIONS AND REPORTS. THE U.S. GOVERNMENT POSITION ON THE IBI SHOULD ALSO BE DISCREETLY MADE KNOWN TO THE REPRESENTATIVES OF OTHER DEVELOPED COUNTRIES NOT ALREADY IBI MEMBERS.

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7. IBI MEMBER STATES ARE: ALGERIA, ARGENTINA, BOLIVIA, BRAZIL, CAMEROON, CHILE, CUBA, ECUADOR, FRANCE, GABON, GHANA, IRAN, IRAQ, ISRAEL, ITALY, MADAGASCAR, MEXICO, MOROCCO, NIGERIA, SPAIN, SWAZILAND, AND TUNISIA. ROBINSON

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